

SUBJECT: United Farm Workers et al.

FILE: 92-9831

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Memorandum

March 15, 1967

TO : Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

DATE:

FROM : Fred M. Vinson, Jr.
Assistant Attorney General
Criminal Division

FMV:EEC:srt
144-74-835

SUBJECT: Unknown Subjects - Possible
Violations of 18 U.S.C. 1951

Reports have come to our attention regarding incidents of violence in connection with efforts to organize farm workers in Rio Grande City, near Corpus Christi, Texas. According to a February 24, 1967, story in the Harlingen, Texas VALLEY MORNING STAR, on February 22, a truck owned by La Casita Farms, Inc., carrying produce to a broker buying vegetables for the U.S. Army, was "run off" the road by three persons in another vehicle. Persons subsequently arrested by local authorities on charges relating to this incident have been identified as individuals recently arrested in conjunction with demonstrations for the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC). La Casita Farms reportedly has been the target of a UFWOC campaign to organize agricultural laborers in Rio Grande City.

An editorial of December 30, 1966, in LA VERDAD, a Spanish-English weekly newspaper published in Corpus Christi, also makes reference to "recent violent eruptions" in Rio Grande City regarding labor organizing difficulties among the farm workers of the Rio Grande Valley. We would appreciate being advised of the situation generally and of the particular acts of violence which have come to your attention. We will then be in a position to determine what, if any, investigation should be undertaken.

REC-72 9831-7

IMCT-6 5 MAR 16 1967

59 APR 3 1967

44-38861-1000
4/1/67, 0341 mte

BIT

257

Mr. Fred M. Vinson, Jr.
Assistant Attorney General

March 21, 1967

Director, FBI

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. Walters
1 - Mr. Adams
1 - Mr. Sullivan

UNKNOWN SUBJECTS

① UNITED FARM WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
LA CASITA FARMS, INC. - VICTIM
ANTI-RACKETEERING

Reference is made to your memorandum dated March 15, 1967 (Department file 144-74-835), which requested advice as to certain activities of the captioned Committee.

Our files reveal that in 1966, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) merged with the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). Since October, 1965, considerable information received by this Bureau has been furnished to the Records Administration Office of the Department relating both to Communist infiltration of the NFWA and various demonstrations by such organization in connection with efforts to organize farm workers in Texas and in California. This information sets forth particular incidents as well as the general situation regarding labor organizing difficulties among the farm workers. (161-4719-31; 100-444762)

In addition, information has been received from the [redacted] that on February 1, 1967, the Sheriff's Office had arrested ten individuals on charges of disturbing the peace when they entered the premises of the victim corporation to harass the nonunion workers. Reportedly, there were among those arrested two individuals connected with UFWOC and five religious leaders. All of the persons arrested were released after posting \$100 personal recognizance bond.

It is suggested you may wish to review information in Department files prior to any investigation being instituted by this Bureau. No further action will be taken by the FBI in the captioned matter in the absence of a specific request from the Department.

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Casper _____
Callahan _____
Conrad _____
Felt _____
Gale _____
Rosen _____
Sullivan _____
Tavel _____
Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Holmes _____
Gandy _____

1 - 100-444762

JRA:cmh
(10)

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

APR 4 1967

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

NOTE:

Criminal Division advised of alleged violence as reported in newspapers concerning labor organizing activities of captioned Committee with regard to laborers of the victim corporation; requested advice of the situation generally and particular acts of violence coming to our attention; and indicated it would determine whether investigation was warranted under Anti-Racketeering (AR) Statute (18 USC 1951) which prohibits extortionate demands induced by violence.

No investigation under AR is being instituted since labor organizational activities are not considered extortion as defined in AR Statute.

Our investigation as to possible Communist infiltration of NFWA, independent labor union (now known as UFWOC), in the past did not indicate it was controlled by Communists, but that Communist Party members or sympathizers have furnished support in certain activities concerning grape growers in California. Various demonstrations by this organization in form of marches and auto caravans during 1966, were reportedly for the purpose of focusing attention on the organization by obtaining publicity.

San Antonio and Houston Offices being requested by separate communication to keep Bureau advised of any further incidents which occur relating to the organizational attempts of the union in the Rio Grande Valley.

LET TO HO 45M
3-22-67
JRM:cmk

SACs, Houston (62-2417) (Enc.)
San Antonio (62-3257) (Enc.)

March 22, 1967

Director, FBI

1 -

UNKNOWN SUBJECTS
② UNITED FARM WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
① LA CASITA FARMS, INC. - VICTIM
ANTI-RACKETEERING

Forwarded herewith to each office is one copy of memorandum from the Criminal Division of the Department dated 3/15/67, which is self-explanatory.

For the information of the field, the Bureau has responded to the Criminal Division memorandum advising that our files reveal in 1966, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) merged with the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). The Department was advised that since October, 1965, considerable information received by the Bureau has been furnished to the Department relating both to Communist infiltration of NFWA and various demonstrations by such organization in connection with efforts to organize farm workers in Texas and in California. In addition, the Department was informed of information received from the

concerning the arrest on 2/1/67, of ten individuals on charges of disturbing the peace when they entered the premises of the victim corporation to harass nonunion workers. It was suggested the Department may wish to review information in its files prior to any investigation being instituted by the Bureau, and the Department was advised no further action will be taken by the FBI in the absence of a specific request from the Department.

No specific investigation is being requested at this time, but each office should insure that the Bureau is promptly advised of any incidents which arise in the future relating to organizational attempts or other activities of the captioned Committee in the Rio Grande Valley.

MAILED 6

4 APR 22 1967

COMM-FBI

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Tavel _____
Trotter _____
Tele. Room _____
Holmes _____
Gandy _____

1 - Los Angeles (Info) (Enc.) (100-67449)
1 - 100-444762

JRA:cmh
(8)

EX-112

REC-7

9831-

17 MAR 27 1967

70 APR 11 1967

MAIL ROOM ☒ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

260

Letter to SACs, Houston, San Antonio
RE: UNSUBS; UNITED FARM WORKERS
ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Any such incidents coming to your attention should be furnished to the Bureau promptly by appropriate communications bearing captions pertaining to particular activities of the Committee and, in any event, LHM's suitable for dissemination should be submitted.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.
WASHINGTON, D.C.

11 May 1967

Respectfully referred to

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice
Washington, D C

Dear Sir

The attached letter from
[REDACTED] is self-explanatory.

It is submitted to you for
whatever consideration you can give
it commensurate with your policies.

I am also sending [REDACTED]
letter to the Attorney General as well
as the Commissioner of Immigration and
the Labor Department.

With my regards always, I am

Very respectfully,

E. (Kika) de la Garza
E. (Kika) de la Garza

M. C., 15th District.

T E X A S

df

EXP. PROC.

31 MAY 12 1967

MAY 16 1967

2 ENCLOSURE

16
a. R. 15
ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

262

May 9, 1967

McAllen, Texas 78501

Rep. E. de la Garza
House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. de la Garza.

I spoke to you on the
telephone last year while you
were in the Valley concerning
the Starr County labor trouble.

I am enclosing an article
which appeared in the Valley
Morning Star to-day. It seems
that the "hoodlums" are out
to ruin the only chance that
Starr County has had to make
any money in years.

McAllen, Texas 78501

You Can Believe Me When I
say that the farmers and
producer people are almost
at the end of their row—
What good will the strikers
do if all industries close
down?

Of course my first question
is — Why is the United
States Government protecting
and showing deference
to this class of people? Most
of them are engaged in
un-American activities
and have no regard for

McAllen, Texas 78501

human rights has properly
This situation is so
distressing to the citizens
who are still trying to
maintain an independent
way of life - I speak not
as member of the wealthy
class but as an ordinary,
average person who is still
trying along with others
to maintain a wholesome
attitude.

There are two Rangers
on guard at Rio Grande

McAllen, Texas 78501

city, having deputized some
of the natives - But I am
afraid that this will
prove not enough when the
time is ripe, as quoted in
the article, for these
unscrupulous people to
move in -

Is there any protection
for those who would preserve
our heritage and who are
just trying - ? Sincerely yours -
Mrs. H. L. Wade

Rangers Stand By As Melon Season Opens

RIO GRANDE CITY — A militant farm workers union claiming it can draw support for a majority of Rio Grande Valley farm workers, said Monday it was waiting for the right moment to make its move against South Texas melon shippers.

Gilbert Padilla said that the union would probably make its move later this week. "We will determine at what point we can hurt them the most and move at that point," Padilla said.

Padilla, a union vice president, said the union had commitments from rail, truck and longshoremen's groups to hold up transportation of the crop if it is harvested.

Both union and a spokesman for La Casita Farms said Texas Rangers were around, watching pickets. The union—the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee—sent about 40 pickets to seven Rio Grande Valley farms.

At La Casita, the biggest farm in the area, two busloads of Mexican nationals picked cantaloupes under a scorching sun.

The pickets carried signs saying "viva la Huelga (Long Live the Strike)" and the red, black and white Mexican strike flag.

The union vice president said he was confident almost all of the workers would go along with a union request to stop off the

He said the union has not asked the workers yet but he believed the request would be honored almost unanimously.

Ray Rochester, general manager of La Casita Farms, said he was sure the union—the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee—would do all it could to stop the shipment of melons.

"This is the second melon season they have been here and they have to do something," Rochester said.

He said the union would lose too much face if it did not act during the current harvest.

The cantaloupe harvest began moving into full swing Monday. Rochester said the honeydew harvest would probably begin late this week or early next week. Honeydew melons are the major La Casita melon crop. The farm produces about 340,000 boxes of honeydews and about 40,000 boxes of cantaloupes.

Padilla said the union would also try to stop the harvest by asking Mexican labor unions to prohibit their nationals from helping South Texas farmers get in their crops.

"We will play our cards close and pick the strategic time," Padilla said. "There is no doubt when we do move we will cause serious economic loss."

Rochester said an announced union boycott against La Casita vegetable products has been totally ineffective. He predicted the same result for a proposed boycott against melons.

"It is hard to boycott produce that is shipped from Miami to San Francisco," he said.

REC-64

May 16, 1967

EX-103

Honorable Kika de la Garza
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

My dear Congressman:

I have received your communication of May 11th,
with enclosures.

You may wish to advise your constituent, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] of McAllen, Texas, that substantially the same information she
furnished you had previously been given to this Bureau. We advised
the Department of Justice of this matter and they have not requested
us to conduct any investigation. She may wish to direct further in-
quiries concerning this subject to Honorable Fred M. Vinson, Jr.,
Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, United States Depart-
ment of Justice, Washington, D. C. 20530.

Sincerely yours,
J. Edgar Hoover

NOTE: Cordial relations maintained with Congressman de la Garza
has requested he be addressed as above. Bufiles contain no record of
[REDACTED] Enclosures included [REDACTED] letter comment
upon a labor strike by melon farm workers in the Rio Grande Valley
an article from an unknown newspaper reporting the strike.

Criminal Division advised of alleged violence as
reported in newspapers concerning labor organizing activities of
captioned Committee* with regard to laborers of the victim corporation
(La Casita Farms, Inc.) ©*United Farm Workers Organizing Com

Tolson _____
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Callahan _____
Conrad _____
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Gale _____
Rosen _____
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Tele. Room _____
Holmes _____
Gandy _____

BGH:mlb (5)

55 MAY 23 1967

MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

CONTINUED - OVER

268

Honorable Kika de la Garza

NOTE CONTINUED:

requested advice of the situation generally and particular acts of violence coming to our attention; and indicated it would determine whether investigation was warranted under Anti-Racketeering (AR) Statute (18 USC 1951) which prohibits extortionate demands induced by violence.

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Our investigation as to possible Communist infiltration of NFWA, independent labor union (now known as UFWOC), in the past did not indicate it was controlled by Communists, but that Communist Party members or sympathizers have furnished support in certain activities concerning grape growers in California. Various demonstrations by this organization in form of marches and auto caravans during 1966, were reportedly for the purpose of focusing attention on the organization by obtaining publicity.

San Antonio and Houston Office were requested by separate communication to keep Bureau advised of any further incidents which occur relating to the organizational attempts of the union in the Rio Grande Valley.

5/16/67

1 - [REDACTED]
1 - [REDACTED]

AIRTEL

To: SAC, San Antonio (62-3269)

From: Director, FBI (100-444762)

**ACTIVITIES CONCERNING FARM WORKERS
STRIKE IN RIO GRANDE CITY, TEXAS
MISCELLANEOUS-INFORMATION CONCERNING**

ReSAtel 5/13/67, no copies to Houston or Los Angeles.

San Antonio should incorporate information contained in referenced teletype into an LHM suitable for dissemination, and submit to Bureau by return mail.

The Criminal Division of the Department has previously expressed an interest in the activities of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and dissemination of various incidents is being made to that Division, among others. Bureau instructions regarding submission of such LHMs is set forth in Bureau airtel to Houston and San Antonio dated 3/22/67. You should see that such instructions are followed in the future.

1 - Los Angeles (100-67449)

1 - Houston (62-2417)

1 - 92-9831

AEH:cmh

(8) *cmh*

DUPLICATE YELLOW

NOT RECORDED

202 MAY 18 1967

55 MAY 25 1967

270

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.
WASHINGTON, D.C.

15 May 1967

Respectfully referred to

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Justice Department
Washington, D C

Dear Sir

The attached is submitted
for whatever consideration you can give
it commensurate with your policies.

With my thanks and regards, I
am

Very respectfully,

F. de la Garza
E. (Kika) de la Garza

ENCLOSURE

M. C., 15th District.
TEXAS

REC 99

Mr. Tolson	✓
Mr. DeLoach	✓
Mr. Mohr	✓
Mr. Wick	✓
Mr. Casper	✓
Mr. Callahan	✓
Mr. Conrad	✓
Mr. Felt	✓
Mr. Gale	✓
Mr. Rosen	✓
Mr. Sullivan	✓
Mr. Tavel	✓
Mr. Trotter	✓
Tele. Room	✓
Miss Holmes	✓
Miss Gandy	✓

EXP. PROC.

MAY 17 1967

CORRESPONDENCE

JUN 5 1967

211

CLASS OF SERVICE
This is a day message
only. It is not of char-
acter to be used by the
postman.

WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

TELEGRAM

R. W. McFALL
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
DL - Day Letter
NL - Night Letter
LT - In Transit
ET - Extra Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of transmission is shown in the date line on international telegrams. LOCAL TIME at point of destination is shown in the date line on international telegrams.

BUB121 (08)NSA281
NS HGA050P PD TDHG MERCEDES TEX 15 358P CST
NON KIKA DE LA GARZA
HOUSE OFFICE BLDG WASHDC

WE ARE URGING GOVERNOR CONNALLY FOR THE TEXAS RANGERS SUPPORT
THE TEXAS RANGERS HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL IN MAINTAINING LAW
AND ORDER DURING THE PAST WEEK IN STARR COUNTY THIS HAS BEEN
HELPFUL TO THE ENTIRE RIO GRANDE VALLEY. UNION ORGANIZERS ARE
MAKING NO PROGRESS AND DO NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE WORKERS.
THE UNION OPENLY BOASTS THEY WILL RUIN WE GROWERS IF WE DO
NOT SUBMIT TO UNION DEMANDS ANY ASSISTANCE YOU CAN GIVE WILL
BE GREATLY APPRECIATED

[REDACTED] BY [REDACTED]
(05).

SF120-112

ENCLOSURE

4-98315

272

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.
WASHINGTON, D.C.

15 May, 1967

Respectfully referred to

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Justice Department
Washington, D C

Dear Sir

The attached is submitted
for whatever consideration you can give
it commensurate with your policies.

With my thanks and regards,
I am

Very respectfully,

E. (Kika) de la Garza
E. (Kika) de la Garza

REC 99

ENCLOSURE

M. C., 15th District.
TEXAS

CORRESPONDENCE
BW

273

Mr. Tolson	✓
Mr. DeLoach	✓
Mr. Mohr	✓
Mr. Casper	✓
Mr. Callahan	✓
Mr. Conrad	✓
Mr. Felt	✓
Mr. Gale	✓
Mr. Rosen	✓
Mr. Sullivan	✓
Mr. Tavel	✓
Mr. Trotter	✓
Tele. Room	✓
Miss Holmes	✓
Miss Gandy	✓

33-1867-18 MAY 18 1967

WESTERN UNION

TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

R. W. McFALL
PRESIDENT

BUDOS 07 NSA238

NS HGA038 DL PD

HARLINGEN TEX 15 300P CST

HONORABLE E DE LA GARZA

HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING WASHDC

WE HAVE TODAY URGED GOVERNOR CONNALLY TO CONTINUE TO HAVE THE
TEXAS RANGERS IN STARR COUNTY AS THEY HAVE BEEN VITAL TO MAINTAINING
LAW AND ORDER WHILE OUR MELON HARVEST CONTINUES. NO STRIKE
EXISTS BUT THE LABOR AGITATORS OPENLY THREATEN TO RUIN OUR
GROWERS IF THEY DON'T SUBMIT TO UNION DEMANDS. THE HARRASSMENT
THAT LA CASITA FARMS HAS BEEN SUEJECTED TO DURING THE PAST
YEAR IS DEPLORABLE AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD INTERVENE
AND PUT A STOP TO IT. ANY ASSISTANCE YOU CAN GIVE WILL BE APPRECIATED

(02).

SPR 1938

Jexan

92-9831-4
ENCLOSURE

274

May 19, 1967

MCT 24m
REC 99

Honorable Kika de la Garza
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

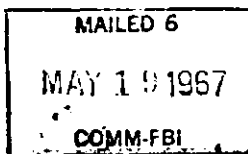
My dear Congressman:

I have received your communications of May 15th together with copies of the telegrams sent to you by Messrs. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

You may wish to advise them that we have previously brought to the attention of the Department of Justice substantially the same information which they have furnished you. To date, we have not been requested to conduct any investigation. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] may desire to direct further inquiries concerning this matter to Honorable Fred M. Vinson, Jr., Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, United States Department of Justice, Washington, D. C. 20530.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover



NOTE: Cordial relations maintained with de la Garza who has requested to be addressed as above. [REDACTED] is not identifiable in Bufiles, and the La Casita Farms has been the object of union activity. Enclosures were telegrams noting that union organizers for the fruit growers in Starr County, Texas, have threatened to ruin the growers if they do not submit to union demands. The Criminal Division of the Department was last advised of alleged violence concerning this labor movement on March 21, 1967.

BGH:mjb
(6)

NOTE CONTINUED OVER

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Sullivan _____
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Gandy _____

JUN 5 1967

TELETYPE UNIT ☐

275

Honorable Kika de la Garza

①
The United Farm Workers Organizing Committee has been investigated by the Bureau. It was determined that while the union was not communist controlled, Communist Party members or sympathizers have furnished support in certain activities concerning the grape growers in California. No investigation under the Anti-Racketeering Statute was instituted as labor organizational activities are not considered extortion as defined under the Statute. San Antonio and Houston Offices were requested to keep the Bureau advised of further incidents relating to the organizational attempts of the union in Rio Grande Valley. Governor John Connally is on the Special Correspondents' List. The Director wrote Congressman de la Garza on 5-16-67 in connection with another constituent inquiry on this matter. During the investigation of Billie Sol Estes [REDACTED] name was noted in the appointment books of [REDACTED]

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

1 - DeLoach
1 - Rosen
1 - Sullivan

1 - [REDACTED]
1 - [REDACTED]

✓
Tolson
DeLoach
Mohr
Wick
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

TO : MR. DeLOACH

DATE: July 7, 1967

FROM : S. B. DONAHOE

SUBJECT: ACTIVITIES CONCERNING FARM WORKERS STRIKE
RIO GRANDE CITY, TEXAS
MISCELLANEOUS - INFORMATION CONCERNING

Mrs. Mildred Stegall called from the White House this afternoon. She advised that Marvin Watson, Special Assistant to the President, is under the impression that the FBI has investigated and prepared a report on a series of incidents involving farm workers in Rio Grande City, Texas. I told Mrs. Stegall that I had no recollection of any over-all investigation of this situation but that I would check and we would send over a memorandum.

As a matter of background, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, also known as the National Farm Workers Association, has been involved in organizational and strike activities in Rio Grande City for some time directed against fruit and vegetable producers. We have received and disseminated considerable data regarding this situation. We have also conducted several civil rights inquiries as a result of allegations of mistreatment and denial of civil rights by law enforcement officers in connection with the strike of farm workers in that area.

ACTION:

The General Investigative Division should prepare a concise, factual memorandum reviewing the background of this situation in Rio Grande City, indicating the extent and nature of our investigative activity in connection with the situation. A cover letter should be prepared to Mrs. Stegall forwarding the memorandum in response to her request. This should be expedited.

SBD:hmm
(8)
92-9831
1 - 44-36377
1 - 100-444762

REC 17

SI-106

JUL 14 1967

57 JUL 2 1967

277